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Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Appln No. 10/659,263

Atty Docket No. Q77329

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 4 have been amended to clarify the first erasing step. Applicants have also added new claims 7 and 8 which depend from claims 1 and 4, respectively. Support for the amendments to claims 1 and 4, as well as for new claims 7 and 8, can be found throughout the specification and drawings, at least, for example, at page 25.

Objections to the Claims

The Examiner has objected to claims 1 and 4 for allegedly omitting the word "cells" in each of claims 1 and 4. Applicants have amended claims 1 and 4 as suggested by the Examiner and respectfully request that this objection be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections

Claims 1-6 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 6,175,194 to Saegusa *et al.* ("Saegusa") in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,836,261 to Kishi *et al.* ("Kishi"). Applicants traverse this rejection.

Neither Saegusa nor Kishi, either alone or in combination, discloses or suggests applying a first voltage to one row electrode of said row electrode pair and a second voltage to the other row electrode of said row electrode pair, wherein said first voltage and said second voltage have the same polarity, as set forth in claim 1.

The Examiner concedes that Saegusa fails to teach a first erasing step and a second erasing step as claimed by Applicants, and relies on Kishi for such disclosure. The Examiner alleges that Kishi discloses the first erasing step, *i.e.*, Kishi's erase period 2, and the second erasing step, *i.e.*, Kishi's erase period 1. Thus, as alleged by the Examiner, Kishi's second erase discharge period is equivalent to the claimed first erasing step.

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In the second erase discharge period of Kishi, an erasing discharge occurs between an electrode X, which is one row electrode of a row electrode pair, and an electrode Y, which is the other row electrode of the row electrode pair, by *applying a positive voltage V_{ax} to the electrode X and a negative voltage $-V_y$ to the electrode Y.*

On the other hand, the first erasing step Ecl of Applicants' claim 1 causes an erasing discharge by applying a first voltage to one row of electrode Y of the row of electrode pair Y and X, and a second voltage to the other row electrode X, in which *the first and second voltages have the same polarity.* Accordingly, the erasing discharge occurs between a column electrode D and one row electrode Y of the row electrode pair Y and X.

Thus, the second the erase discharge period of Kishi is different from the first erasing step as recited by claim 1, since discharge does not occur between the one row electrode Y and the other row electrode X of the electrode pair Y and X. Therefore, even if one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made had been motivated to combine the references, the combination would still not result in the claimed features.

Accordingly, claim 1 is patentable over the combination of Saegusa and Kishi. Claim 4 contains features similar to the features recited in claim 1 and is therefore patentable for similar reasons. Claims 2, 3, 5 and 6, which depend from one of claims 1 and 4, are patentable at least by virtue of their dependence.

New Claims

Applicants have added new claims 7 and 8, which depend from claims 1 and 4, respectively. Applicants submit that claims 7 and 8 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependence from claims 1 and 4.

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Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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